

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

- A3
1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for diagnosing melanoma which comprises:
 - (a) contacting in vitro a biological specimen containing malignant cells with a probe which selectively recognizes microphthalmia (Mi); and
 - (b) determining whether Mi is being expressed in the specimen by the probe's binding to Mi, wherein said binding is indicative of Mi expression and, wherein the expression of Mi in a malignant cell is indicative of melanoma.
 2. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, wherein the probe is an antibody for Mi.
 3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein the probe detects the presence of an ~~the level of~~ mRNA expressing Mi.
 4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein the biological specimen consists of ~~is a~~ malignant cells ~~cell~~.
 5. (WITHDRAWN)
 6. (WITHDRAWN)
 7. (WITHDRAWN)
 8. (WITHDRAWN)
 9. (WITHDRAWN)
 10. (WITHDRAWN)
 11. (WITHDRAWN)
 12. (WITHDRAWN)
 13. (NEW) The method of claim 2, wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

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14. (NEW) The method of claim 13, wherein the antibody binds to an epitope in the N-terminus Taq-Sac fragment of human Mi.